REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The applicants' attorneys appreciate the Examiner's thorough search and examination of the present patent application.

Claim 1 has been amended to include the features of claim 2, now canceled.

Claims 1-12 and 14-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Olsen, U.S. Patent No. 5,758,069. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Applicants' amended claim 1 is an improvement over prior art license certificate management systems which, as described in the Background section of applicants' present patent application, cause software applications to cease functioning (i.e., issue a "hard stop") when a license is deemed to be "out-of-compliance" (see applicants' specification page 4). Accordingly, applicants' claim 1 authorization system comprises an "interactive authorization tool" that enables a first list of authorized personnel to "register approval of a proposed creation or modification to at least one license certificate." A "second list" specifies individuals who have access to a "license certification creation or modification tool" which is "operable to create or modify license certificates." Thus, a first list of personnel (for example, authorized by a software vendor) operate the interactive authorization tool to register approval of a proposed creation or modification to a license certificate. A second list of personnel operate the license certification creation or modification tool to implement license changes.

Olsen, in contrast, teaches a prior art license management system wherein a license certificate database comprising license certificate information is stored in a distributed network environment. Olsen teaches the use of a plurality of license service providers ("LSPs") which "construct license certificate objects" and collect "available" license rights into the object (see column 2, lines 44-54). The objects reference license information stored in the database and enable (or disable) applications according to respective license terms. By providing a plurality of LSPs that create license objects over a distributed network, Olsen's system enables license information pertaining to individual clients to be retrieved from a plurality of computer devices distributed over the network.

Olson's license management system is typical of the prior art in that a database stores information regarding license certificates and is referenced in response to requests for access to

software applications. However, unlike applicants' claim 1 authorization system, Olsen does not teach or suggest an interactive tool that enables a person of a first list to register approval of a proposed license change (or creation), and wherein a person, of a second list, actually implements the change to the license certificate. Unlike applicants' claim 1, which prevents the undesirable "hard stop" by providing an interactive authorization tool, Olsen's system polls one or more LSPs for an application's respective license terms and reacts accordingly (i.e., refusing access when appropriate) (see, for example, Olson, Figs. 5, 6, and 8B). Applicants' amended claim 1 offers a benefit over the prior art licensing systems taught by Olsen by providing an interactive authorization tool operable by authorized personnel who are identified by a first list to register approval of a proposed creation or modification of a license certificate. Unlike applicants' amended claim 1, Olsen does not teach a second list of authorize personnel who have access to applicants' license certification or modification tool to create or modify licenses that are approved by personnel identified on the first list.

Applicants respectfully submit that at least two elements of applicants' amended claim 1 is missing from the teachings of Olsen and, therefore, Olsen does not anticipate applicants' amended claim 1. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 3-12 and 14-18 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1 and are, therefore, patentable for the same reasons, as well as because of the combination of features in those claims with the features set forth in the claim(s) from which they depend.

Claim 13 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Olsen, in view of Snyder, U.S. Patent No. 6,070,171.

Claim 13 depends directly from claim 1 and includes the added feature of a tool included in the controller that denies rights to a given user-id to create/modify license certificates after the given user-id has attempted a pre-specified number of unauthorized modifications. The Examiner cites to Snyder for teaching a software tracking service that compares user information and software information as a token, and denies rights to a given user after the given user has attempted a pre specified number of unauthorized modifications. The remaining features of claim 13 are deemed by the Examiner to be taught by Olsen.

As described above, applicants respectfully submit that Olsen does not teach or suggest applicants' interactive authorization tool that is operable by authorized personnel identified by a first list to register approval of a proposed creation or modification of a license certificate. Further, Olsen does not teach a second list of authorize personnel who have access to applicants' license certification or modification tool to create or modify licenses. Therefore, even assuming for the sake of argument that one were to combine Olsen and Snyder as the Examiner has done, applicants' claim 13 still would not be taught because elements of claim 13 are missing from the combined teachings of Olsen and Snyder.

For the reasons set forth above, applicants submit that the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance, for which such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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